(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the Poineer dated January 18, 1995 under the caption "Government may open insurance to foreign firms";

(b) if so, what are the details of the proposal received from the U.S. Commerce Secretary in that regard and the reaction of the Government of India in regard thereto; and

(c) whether Government have analysed its impact on the functioning of LIC and other Government Insurance Companies and if so, the details thereof and the extent to which it would affect their business?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) The question of opening up our insurance industry to external competition did not figure in the discussions held between our Prime Minister and the US Commerce Secretary on 17th January, 1995 as reported in the Pioneer on the 18th January, 1995.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Amount collected from importers and Exporters as customs duty

55. SHRI PRAVAT KUMAR SAMANTARAY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total amount collected from Importers and Exporters operating in different major ports as customs duty by the Customs Department during the years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95;

(b) whether it is a fact that customs collection is falling down; and

(c) if so, what are the contributory factors thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) The total customs duty collected from all custom houses and ports during 1992-93, 1993-94 and April, '94 — Jan. '95 are as under:—

Period	(Rs. in crores)
1992-93 . . .	23717.28
1993-94 (Prov.) .	22079.49
April, '94—Jan., '95 (Prov.)	21133.23

(b) The customs revenue collected during April, '94—Jan., '95 has shown 18.98% increase over the collection made in the corresponding period of previous year.

(c) Does not arise, in view of (b) above.

Pending cases of disputes

56. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of cases of disputes relating to Central excise, customs, income-tax pending in the various courts of law in the country;

(b) the number of cases in which stay orders have been issued by the courts and the steps taken by Government to get those stay orders vacated;

(c) since when these cases are pending and the steps taken to get them finalised to recover the revenue of Government locked up in those cases;

(d) whether Government had appointed any committee to go into the above and to suggest ways and means to overcome the increase in the litigation cases;